

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 8-11 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 11 are independent. By this reply, claims 4-7 and 12-13 have been cancelled.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 5-10 and 13 are objected to, but allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Without acquiescing to any of the Examiner's allegations made but to advance prosecution only, independent claims 1 and 11 have been amended to generally include the subject matter of allowable claims 5 and 13, respectively. Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 13 and their dependent claims are believed to be allowable over the prior art of record.

Abstract

At the Examiner's request, a new Abstract is provided according to U.S. patent practice. Thus, the objection to the Abstract should be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103 Rejection

Claims 1, 2 and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ueda et al. Claims 11 and 12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Yamamoto et al. Claim 3 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ueda et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, without acquiescing to the Examiner's allegations made in rejecting these claims but to expedite prosecution only, independent claims 1 and 11 have been amended to include generally the subject matter of allowable claims 5 and 13, respectively. Thus, independent claims 1 and 11 and their dependent claims (due to the dependency) are patentable over the applied references, and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

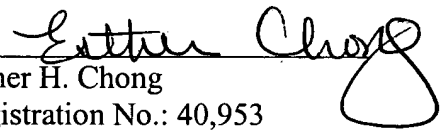
For the foregoing reasons and in view of the above clarifying amendments, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw all of the objections and rejections of record, and to provide an early issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: Abstract of the Disclosure